

also wish to take a moment and acknowledge all the efforts and support by the coaches and parents, the cheerleaders, the school band, the teachers and administrators, and all of the students, fans, and community members who came out this season to support the Pirates. Together they made up a winning support system which led to an unforgettable season.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I want to offer my personal congratulations and best wishes. All the accolades, awards, and trophies are rightfully deserved. Enjoy being State Champions, Go Pirates!

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 9, 2013

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 621, had I been present, I would have voted "no."

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 9, 2013

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$17,227,010,669,351.91. We've added \$6,600,133,620,438.83 to our debt in 4 years. This is \$6.6 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

REGARDING H. RES. 417

HON. ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 9, 2013

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, as Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific—which has broad jurisdiction for U.S. foreign policy affecting the region, including India—I rise today to express my concerns about H. Res. 417 which purports to praise India's rich religious diversity and commitment to tolerance and equality while reaffirming the need to protect the rights and freedoms of religious minorities.

While I have the utmost respect for my colleagues who have introduced and co-sponsored this Resolution, I have a difference of opinion regarding the Resolution and its unintended consequences. The Resolution does little to praise India or strengthen U.S.-India relations but rather focuses on the 2002 Gujarat riots some 11 years after the fact.

Thanks, in part, to the efforts of Mr. Sanjay Puri, Chairman of USINPAC, who has mobilized the Indian-American community in opposition to the Resolution, I highly doubt H. Res. 417 will ever see Floor action. However, the timing of the Resolution is unfortunate as it unintentionally invokes the name of the U.S.

House of Representatives for purposes of influencing India's upcoming elections.

For this reason, I feel the need to include my statement in the Congressional Record for historical purposes to clear up the misinformation put forward by H. Res. 417. As I said shortly after the riots and ever since, like every other Member of Congress committed to human rights I see eye to eye with the national and international community that what happened in Gujarat calls for justice and accountability. But India, like the United States, has an independent and transparent Judiciary and, after an investigation that has been ongoing for more than a decade, India's Supreme Court and its Special Investigation Team have not found any evidence against Chief Minister Narendra Modi. And so, just as the U.S. would expect India to accept the findings of the U.S. Supreme Court, I believe it is time for the U.S. to accept the findings of India's Supreme Court.

Some 8 years after the fact, H. Res. 417 also commends the U.S. government for exercising its authority in 2005 under the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 to deny a U.S. visa to Chief Minister Narendra Modi on the grounds of religious freedom violations. However, technically speaking, no travel ban is in place. Chief Minister Modi was denied one visa in 2005. In September 2013, in response to a letter I sent to U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, I was informed by the State Department that visa eligibility is determined by standards in the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) based on information provided by the applicant or otherwise available at the time of application, and that "any future visa application put forward by Chief Minister Modi will be carefully considered and adjudicated in accordance with U.S. law." While I believe such a response by the State Department is grossly inadequate and an affront to U.S.-India relations because of its failure to unequivocally put this matter to rest, the underlying message is clear. No travel ban is in place.

Shri Narendra Modi may very well be India's next Prime Minister, and Resolutions like H. Res. 417 do little to help strengthen U.S.-India relations or protect and promote U.S. interests abroad, especially in the Asia Pacific region. For the record, Chief Minister Modi is a democratically elected leader. He has been elected three times by the majority of some 60 million constituents.

In India's upcoming 2014 elections, every voter should have the continued right to choose the candidate which emerges as the man of destiny, without undue influence from the United States or any other government. This is why I commend USINPAC for working with key leaders in the U.S. House of Representatives to set the record straight about Shri Narendra Modi, and for encouraging Members of Congress to open immediate dialogue with the Chief Minister.

I thank Chairman Ed Royce of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs for also voicing his objections to H. Res. 417. India is a multi-cultural and multi-religious Democracy, where the Leader of the Ruling party is of Italian heritage, the Prime Minister is a Sikh, and the Vice President is a Muslim in an 80 percent Hindu nation. As the world's largest and oldest democracies, our inherent values and substance bind India and the United States together. Therefore, it is my sincere hope that

the U.S. House of Representatives will oppose any effort that seeks to tear us apart.

HONORING VOLUNTEERS FROM OREGON VETERANS TREATMENT COURTS

HON. GREG WALDEN

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 9, 2013

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to convey my deepest appreciation to the team members of both the Klamath County and the Marion County Veterans Treatment Courts on visiting the Nation's capital this week. These Oregonians are here to attend the inaugural "Vet Con," or Veterans Treatment Court Conference, the first ever gathering of veterans court team members from across the Nation. The conference is being put on by Justice for Vets, a professional service division of the National Association of Drug Court Professionals, with the goal of providing in-depth training to the nearly 200 veterans treatment courts across the Nation.

Key to the operation of a veterans treatment court is the collaborative partnership of the judicial system, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the county Veterans Service Office, veterans service organizations, community agencies and volunteers. These community members partner in a treatment team which convenes before each court session to review cases and develop problem solving recommendations. This coordinated response addresses an array of issues from community protection and restitution to offender rehabilitation. Weekly court appearances afford close judicial supervision of the veteran defendant's progress. The court hands out encouragement and sanctions as warranted.

I have had the honor of working with the Klamath County Veterans Treatment Court since it was started by Judge Marci Atkinson in November 2010. The development of the Klamath County Veterans Treatment Court began with discussions between Klamath County District Attorney Ed Caleb and Klamath County Veterans Service Officer Kathy Pierce. They formed an exceptional team to attend one of the first veterans court training seminars. Since then, Judge Atkinson and her team have built a very effective court utilizing best treatment practices to address the needs of veteran defendants in the criminal justice system.

Only two members of the Klamath County Veterans Treatment Court were able to attend this week's "Vet Con" conference. Kathy Pierce, as I mentioned before, is the Klamath County Veterans Service Officer. Kathy has been such an important part of ensuring that veterans in Klamath County are linked up with the benefits they have earned. Kathy works very closely with my office to help veterans resolve issues with their claims and appeals.

Steve Tillson serves as the Klamath County Veterans Treatment Court Coordinator. Steve has a great deal of responsibility in keeping the court well run and organized.

Steve is here this week not only for the training, but is serving as a trainer for other coordinators. We are proud of the work that Steve and Kathy have accomplished over the last four years and we are grateful for their